
Communication Based Instruction & Evaluation of Language Revitalization



Julia Nee
UC Berkeley
jnee@berkeley.edu

Overview

- Community background: What is Teotitlán del Valle Zapotec (TdVZ)?
- History and reasoning: Why kids' camps? Who is involved?
- Implementation: How was the class carried out?
- Evaluation: What methodologies did we use? What went well? What can be improved?
- Recommendations: What pairings of situational factors and interventions provided helpful outcomes?

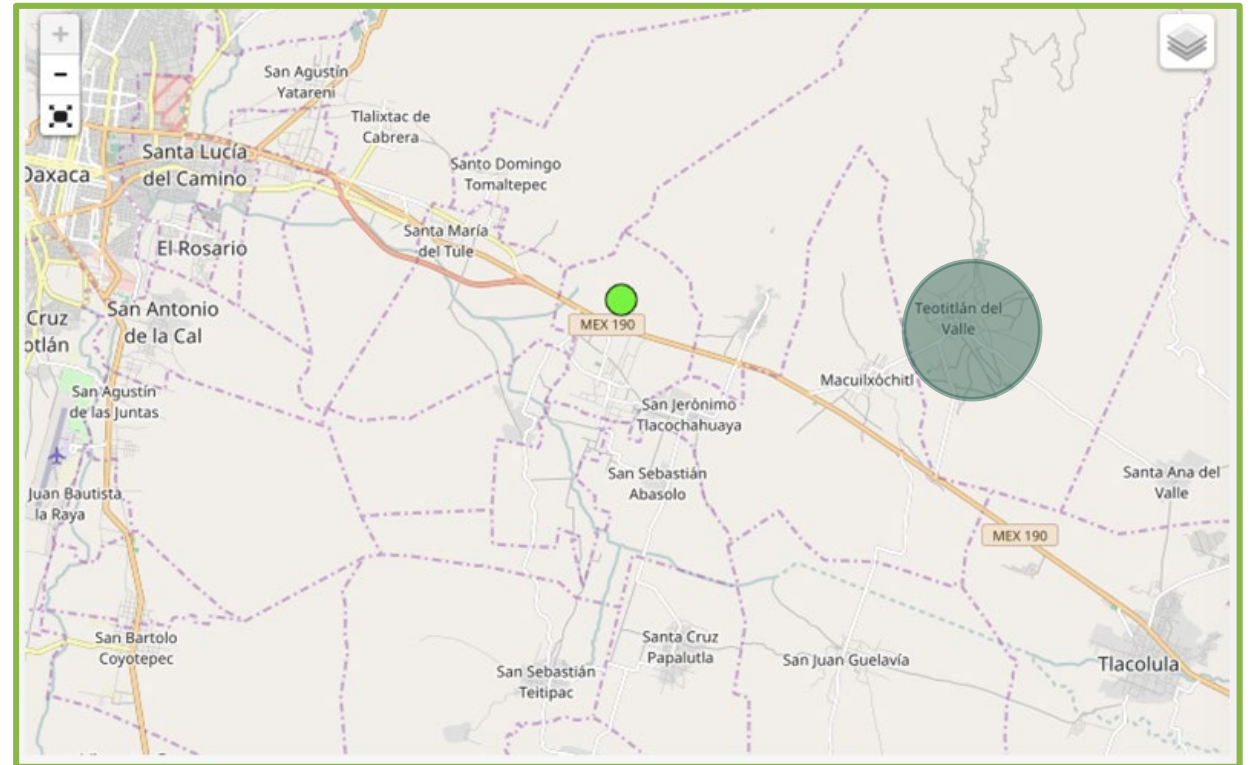


Community background



Community background

- TdVZ is a variety of Western Tlacolula Valley Zapotec (Simon & Fennig 2018)
- ~20 miles from Oaxaca City, Mexico
- ~3,601 speakers (198 monolingual) (Gobierno 2010)
- “Definitely endangered” (UNESCO 2010)



(glottolog.org)



History and reasoning



Why kids' camps?

- Kids ages 5-12 = key demographic in intergenerational language transmission underserved by current revitalization efforts
- 2 hours/day for two weeks in January and in August → fits with students' schedules
- Communication based instruction (Supahan & Supahan 2001) in the classroom + naturalistic interactions around town → opportunities to use Zapotec year-round
- Summer 2016 camp with Prof. Kalinka Velasco Zárate (UABJO; see Velasco Zárate & Ramírez García 2017)
- Summer 2017 (16 hours), 2018 (20 hours), Winter 2019 (22 hours)

Who is involved?

- Municipality of Teotitlán
- Pablo Picasso Biblioteca Pública Municipal and librarians Rosita Jiménez Lorenzo and Grisel Maldonado Hernández
- Native speakers, including Efraín Lazo Pérez & Trinidad Martínez Soza (farming demonstration), Teresa de Jesús Martínez Chávez & Tomasa Chávez (horchata-making demonstration), and Horacio Mendoza (weaving demonstration), among many others
- My language teachers, especially Verónica Bazán Chávez, Efraín Lazo Pérez, Trinidad Martínez Soza, & Isabel Lazo Martínez
- UC Berkeley undergraduate research assistants, Celine Revzani, Cassandra Serrano, Isela Peralta, and Nicholas Carrick
- Me



Implementation



Communication Based Instruction (Supahan & Supahan 2001)

- Setting the stage
 - Review the homework (writing ingredients for a recipe)
- Comprehensible input
 - Present actions used in farming
- Guided practice
- Independent practice
- Assessment

Naa laa _____. Naa _____ iiza.

Xi ridxula'azu ruki'iniu?

Gunii nee sa'au par gakliin:

Laan laan _____.

Naan _____ iizan.

Laan ridxula'azan ruki'inian _____.

Par runian _____, guzii:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Gulebee xi ridxua'azan ruki'inian re'e.

Xi kayuniu lats?

Ruinlaua dmain



Rudeda xi goo dmain



Communication Based Instruction (Supahan & Supahan 2001)

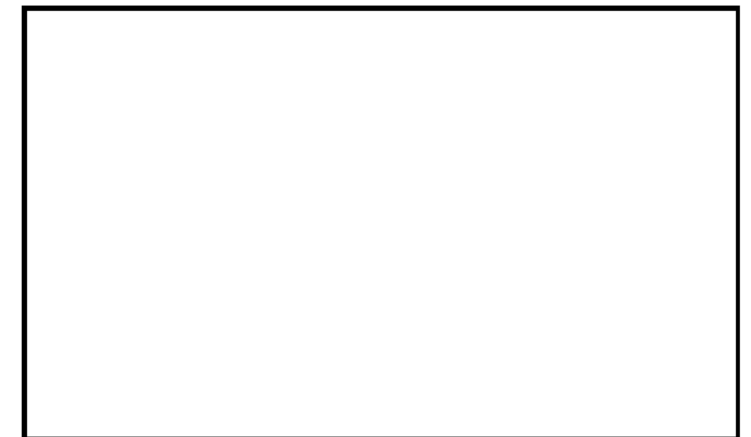
- Setting the stage
 - Review the homework (writing ingredients for a recipe)
- Comprehensible input
 - Present actions used in farming
- Guided practice
 - Simon says
- Independent practice
 - Ask students what time they do different activities
- Assessment
 - Visit a farm and interview the farmers

Naa laa _____. Naa _____ iiza.

Xi kayuniu lats?

1. Xurr rudedu xi goo dmain kan? _____
2. Xurr rusiau lo liu? _____
3. Xurr razilaazu balaa? _____
4. Xurr ruki'iniu kub lats? _____
5. Guk ribekiu geel? _____
6. Guk rilau geel? _____
7. Xi main rapu lats? _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Gulebee lats re'e.





Evaluation



How can we evaluate the effects of the language camps?

- Why is it important to evaluate?
 - Limited time & resources
 - Potential misunderstandings of what students & families will get out of the camp
 - Align everyone's goals and manage expectations in the best way possible (Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1998; Hinton 2001; Bradley 2002; Kroskrity 2009; Beier & Michael 2018)
- Deliberative democratic evaluation (House & Howe 2000) → everyone's voice is heard at every step of the way
- We anticipate the changes to be very slight – so how can we design an instrument that is sensitive enough that any changes will be noticed?

Methods of data collection

- One-on-one interviews (by me) with students, parents, and community members
- Focus group with parents at the end of the course
- Classroom observations and audio recordings

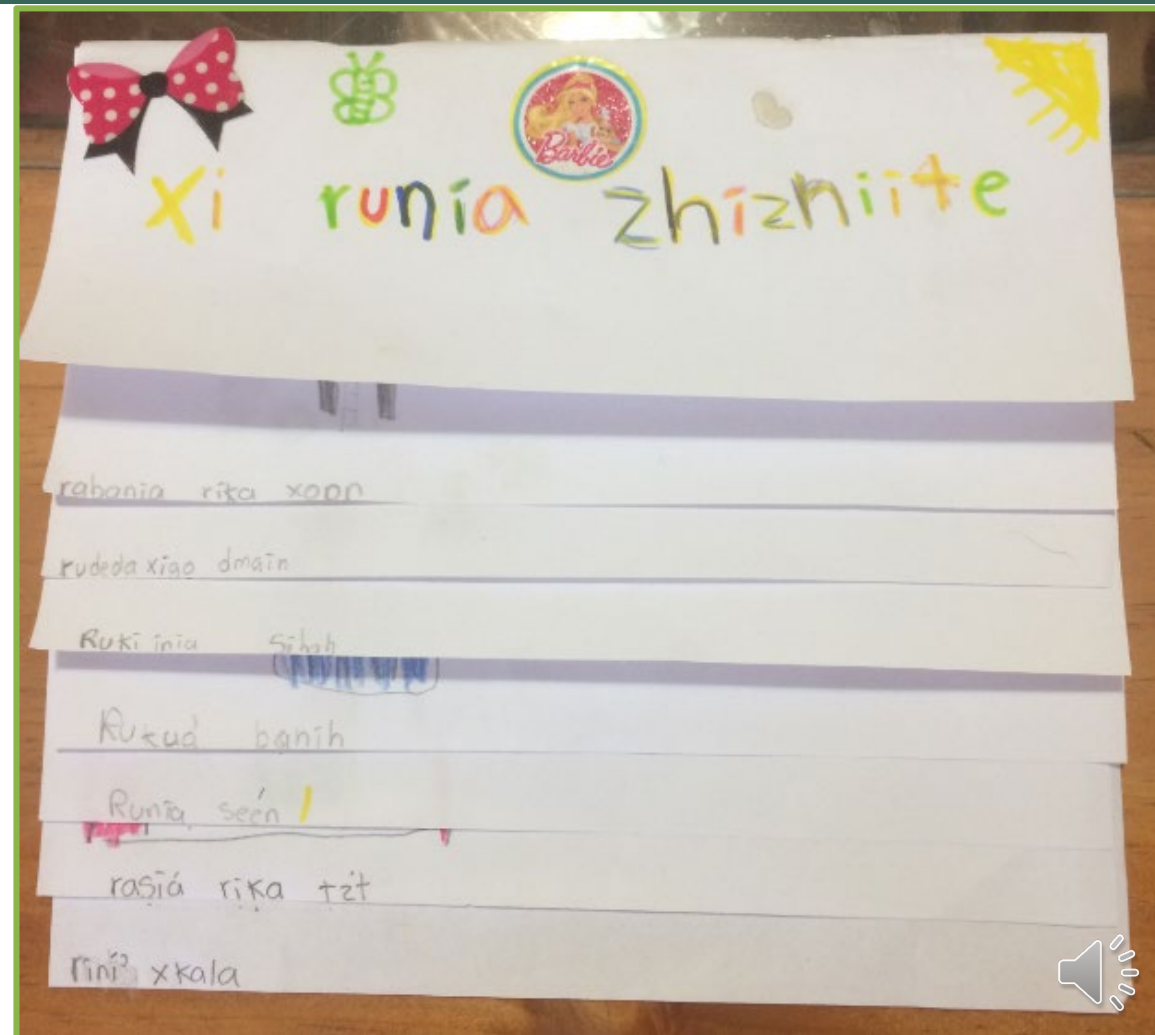


Methods of data collection

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- Naturalistic day-long recordings with students in a pre-test/post-test design
 - How does actual language use differ from reported language use?
 - Pilot study has revealed interesting behaviors

Methods of data collection

Xi runia zhizhiite	What I do everyday
rabania rika xoon [xdilih]	I get up at 8
rudeda xigo dmain	I feed the animals
Ruki'inia sihab	I drink atole (a corn drink)
Rukua' banih	I take a bath
Runia seen	I make dinner
rasia rika tzi [medih]	I sleep at 10
rini' xkala	I dream



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 - Pilot study has revealed interesting behaviors
- **Photovoice** methodology for collecting opinions in an indirect way (Wang & Burris 1997; Wilson et al. 2007)

Photovoice

- Distribute smartphones with 8 megapixel cameras
- “What does speaking Zapotec mean to you?”
- Discussion (from Wilson et al 2007), audio recorded:
 - Why did you take the photo and what might someone else see in it?
 - What did you think or feel about the subject of the photo?

Connection with ancestors

- “Es no perder y preservar nuestra lengua indígena y con ello nuestra cultura, legado de nuestros antepasados zapotecos.”
- “It’s about not losing, preserving our indigenous language, and with that our culture, the legacy of our Zapotec ancestors”



Connection with ancestors

- “Significa que es lo que dejaron nuestros antepasados y abuelos y que temenos que conservar esta lengua y que no se pierde y no se mezcle con el español, puro zapoteco antiguo, lo que dejaron nuestros abuelos y se debe de inculcar esta lengua desde cuando somos chiquitos.”
- “It means it’s what our ancestors and grandparents left us and that we have to conserve the language and that it isn’t lost and it isn’t mized with Spanish, just old Zapotec, what our grandparents left us, and should be instilled in us from the time we’re young.”
- “Es respetar lo que nos dejaron los antepasados, por eso quiero seguirle hablando y enseñarles a mis hermanos.”
- “It’s about respecting what our ancestors left us, that’s why I want to continue speaking and teaching my siblings.”



(photo edited for privacy)

Connection with traditions

- Weaving
- Making tortillas
- Raising turkeys
- Danza de la Pluma



Connection with nature

- “Yo elegí esta planta porque es parte de la naturaleza así como nuestra lengua materna el zapoteco.”
- “I chose this plant because it’s part of nature, just like our mother tongue, Zapotec.”
- “Es como algo que nos identifica como persona, algo único que nosotros temenos.”
- “It’s something that identifies us personally, something unique that we have.”



Photovoice

- Reinforced ideas expressed elsewhere (connection with ancestors, tradition) and allowed for inclusion of new ones (connection with nature)
- Helped in identification of future topics for the classes
- Allowed students to reflect on why they are learning Zapotec and what its significance is for them
- Provided a space for participants to share their unique understandings of language (Leonard 2017)
- Reinforced the choice to focus on intergenerational activities for using the language



Recommendations



Recommendations

- Keep getting feedback from participants using a variety of techniques
 - Naturalistic recordings → what aspects of the course stuck with students?
 - Photovoice → what do participants see as the importance of the language in a broader sense?
- Creating natural contexts for (intergenerational) language use can help students take the language outside the classroom (if they have speakers to talk with)
- Even a short intervention can have impacts on children's ideologies about language



Xtiuzeng Yubtu – Gracias – Thanks



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